
College Council Minutes -approved

Date	11 May 2023, 17.00
Location	Via MS Teams
Present	Lord Geidt (Chair); President & Principal, Professor Shitij Kapur; Nhuoc Lan Tu (Vice-Chair); Vivek Ahuja; Dr Natasha Awais-Dean; Tom Berry; Dr Hillary Briffa; Paul Cartwright; Donna Catley; Sir Jon Coles; Paul Goswell; Sir Ron Kerr; Yasir Khan; Steve Large; Professor Rachel Mills; Professor Kim Piper; Clare Sumner; Professor Richard Trembath.
Apologies	Vinay Jha
In attendance	Shagun Bhandari, KCLSU VP (Postgraduate), standing attendee Annie Kent, CFO/Vice President (Finance), standing attendee Professor Bashir Al-Hashimi, VP (Research & Innovation) Professor Adam Fagan, VP (Education & Student Success) Professor Alberto Sanchez Fueyo (for item 6 Innovation) Dr James Millen (for item 6 Innovation) Dr Thomas Foulkes (for item 6 Innovation) Zakyr Bharwani (for the Community Story) Secretariat: Irene Birrell, College Secretary Xan Kite, Director of Governance Paul Mould, Deputy College Secretary & Chief Compliance Officer Sheronlyn Balfour, Interim Governance Manager

Community Story and Discussion

The Chair introduced the first in a what would be a series of presentations from members of the King's Community about their experience at Kings, and welcomed Zakyr Bharwani, a 3rd year Undergraduate Economics student. In his presentation, Mr Bharwani spoke of his background and the support he had received through the K+ Programme to first access and then achieve in higher education. King's had encouraged his entrepreneurial spirit and he was already engaged in a number of initiatives to support students in schools in London boroughs that he would continue post-graduation. His time at King's had begun during the pandemic with restrictions on socialising which had been difficult, but he felt that King's had done the best that it could to get students settled and keep all modules running.

In terms of what might be improved, he and some colleagues believed that they could have been provided better preparation for first-year examinations to help them understand the different expectations for quality answers at the university level as compared to A-levels.

Zakyr was very complimentary about the work of King's Careers team but thought that there would benefit from promotion of the service at an earlier stage.

Finally, he suggested that King's consider ways in which it could bring together students from families without experience of higher education to help them assimilate and counteract the inevitable 'imposter syndrome' many felt.

Zakyr Bharwani left the meeting.

1 Welcome, Apologies and Notices

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting.

No notice of conflicts of interest had been received. Members confirmed that the currently published register of interests was accurate and that there were no conflicts of interests in relation to any of the agenda items.

2 Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved as circulated.

3 Unanimous Consent Agenda (including Minutes of the Previous Meeting) [KCC-23-5-11-03]

The reports on the Unanimous Consent Agenda were taken as read and noted or approved as set out in the papers.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Actions Log

Noted.

4.2 Other Matters Arising

None.

5 Report of the Chair

No items to report.

Professor Alberto Sanchez Fueyo, Dr James Millen, Dr Thomas Foulkes joined the meeting

6 Innovation Landscape – Strategic Discussion [KCC-23-05-11-06]

The Chair began the item by congratulating Professor Bashir Al-Hashimi, Vice President (Research and Innovation), on behalf of the Council on his recent election to Fellowship of the Royal Society.

Professor Al-Hashimi and Professor Richard Trembath, Senior Vice President (Health and Life Sciences), led a discussion on the rapidly evolving UK environment for university-based innovation and impact. They outlined King's current performance, opportunities and plans for further development. In discussion the following points were made:

- There were three key priorities for research and innovation at King's: (1) to continue to develop research performance and income; (2) to continue to create improved conditions and environment for undertaking of research; and (3) to develop innovation. Innovation in higher education meant the process for transferring research outcomes into benefits, both economic and societal. The outcome of innovation was 'impact' which included commercialisation but also societal impact. Impact could be assessed through impact case studies in the REF which was tied to research funding with £20m of the £80m received at King's being received for impact studies. It could also be assessed in the KEF which was due to carry funding in the future.
 - Council noted the ambitions related to innovation and the current list of spinouts and the pipeline of activity. King's had significant success in spinout companies which was largely due to the motivation of individual staff. The paper outlined ways in which support for those individuals could be strengthened. The innovation ecosystem had three overlapping areas requiring support: (1) discoveries and ideas; (2) physical infrastructure and expertise; and (3) partners and investors. Opportunities included space provision within King's and engagement with industry partnerships including those where staff spend time within multi-nationals. The expansion of facilities in partnership with local boroughs was important, for example the SC1 initiative was a key development in Southwark.
 - Investment required would include increased numbers of professional support staff for innovation. King's had nine professional staff while its peer competitors in the Russell Group had over 100 each. In addition, incentives would be required to make the spinouts attractive
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to investors. The LIHE initiative was such an example.

- Professor Alberto Sanchez Fueyo spoke about his experience in Quell, a firm that produced genetically engineered cell therapies to suppress inflammatory responses. It was a unique enterprise dealing with platform technology that can be used to treat a variety of inflammatory conditions and it has commercial appeal because of its market niche and the expertise of individuals with specific academic and clinical expertise. It was the culmination of 20 years of research, largely driven by Giovanna Lombardi, translated into the clinic. It currently employed 120 people at the White City Campus with capital investment of £60m of which £160m had been raised from a range of European investors. It had been well supported by King's and the Intellectual Property generation partnered with researchers elsewhere had been enormously supportive.
 - Dr James Millen spoke about his experience at an earlier stage in the innovation journey, in his case working on the increasing miniaturisation of technology and quantum mechanics from his perspective as a Physicist - developing computing that better mimics nature and understanding the interface between quantum physics and nanotechnology. This was fundamental science that would lead to precise technology that could then be exploited. It has received £800m in research funding into gas pressure sensors and was developing materials for uses including space exploration. The funders found the investment to be high risk, but also the most interesting development they had seen in 30 years. Funding through research grants had been unsuccessful and so the company had been approached directly. The faculty engagement and enterprise team, contracts team and VP (Research and Innovation) had all played a critical part in securing the needed funding.
 - Data analysis showed that a shortfall in King's impact performance in the past has been in local engagement and this was now a priority to remedy through local growth and regeneration, approached in a strategic way.
 - A further strategic move would be to build faculty academic leadership, making the best of the talent already in place among the faculty associate deans for innovation and impact.
 - Private partnerships were scrutinised for ethic and values alignment with King's through the formal FERG review and the university partnerships group.
 - Council asked how much the development of innovation would cost, how King's would afford it and how it could be achieved effectively. It was noted that the starting principle was that it would earn more than it cost, and a committee would review investment propositions. Many researchers would require investment in laboratories and equipment. It was intended that innovation would generate an income stream that would support future spinouts; and noted that this would take time. King's had experience of success and failure in innovation and would bring its experts together and also work with other universities to build on its strong existing foundation.
 - It was noted that embedding innovation as a core activity should be mapped on to the research culture agenda and working towards equity. Not all disciplines would be able to engage in this kind of collaboration. The maintenance of focus on core academic responsibilities would also be a key aspect for consideration. It was noted that not every academic would be expected to be involved in innovation and that institutions that had success in innovation had elevated it to be a third pillar along with education and research for recognition in terms of career development.
 - The Entrepreneurship Institute at King's already supports student enterprise and would grow to join up and embed this type of activity within the faculties and raise opportunities for students across the College. In time innovation will become embedded in the curriculum on a systematic basis.
 - Council noted the need to move quickly in this sphere and the need for effective metrics to
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understand the impact of investment and further support required. Measurement tools were being developed and would be brought back to Council. King's would need to be less risk averse and take action in the short term in order to compete for success.

- Trade-off decisions would have to be taken by Council. The VP (Research and Innovation) was in the process of recruiting talent to develop plans and would bring back more detailed proposals early in the next academic year.

Professor Alberto Sanchez Fueyo, Dr James Millen, Dr Thomas Foulkes left the meeting

7 Report of the President & Principal

7.1 Summary Report of Current Issues [KCC-23-05-11-07.1]

The President & Principal presented his report to Council. The written report was taken as read and the following additional items and points made:

- The £3m identified for cost-of-living support was almost exhausted and the additional £0.5m contingency funding was now being used. King's had higher levels of student distress recorded than other competitors due in part to its Widening Participation Strategy and the number of students more badly affected by the cost of living increases than enrolled in other institutions.
- Waiting list times for Counselling & Mental Health Support had been higher at King's than in many other institutions but this had been reduced significantly with efforts being made now to reduce further. It was noted that high risk individuals required immediate attention, and this was provided for through the focused Student of Concern procedure which cuts across all other waiting times. The Principal would share this procedure with Council members.
- Apprenticeship opportunities were currently small scale at King's but potential ways of increasing them were being investigated.
- Admission numbers for 2023-24 were strong.
- King's was subject to four trade disputes with UCU, two national and two local. Mitigations were in place for the marking and assessment boycott in place such that all eligible students would be able to progress and graduate. The local issues included the composition of Council and a range of terms and conditions issues around family matters.
- A staff Council member reported that information on process to be followed in the light of the marking and assessment boycott had not reached all module convenors and the Principal undertook to ensure that this was followed up with the VP (Education and Student Success) as he had understood that this information was being disseminated on a faculty-by-faculty basis through the Executive Deans.
- Some academic staff believed that the 50 percent reduction in pay on staff who were participating in the marking boycott was disproportionate given the proportion of their workload concerned with marking. It was noted that King's had taken the 50% approach as an acknowledgement that King's does not accept partial performance as appropriate in any role. This was the approach being taken by most institutions although some had exercised their right to take 100%. This had been the subject of lengthy discussion amongst Vice-Chancellors.

7.2 Portfolio Simplification [KCC-23-05-11-07.2]

The Vice President (Education and Student Success) reported achievements in portfolio reform resulting from the Portfolio Simplification review. The review had encompassed all programmes

and modules and had been undertaken to reform the curriculum and significantly improve the quality of the education offered. It had enabled curriculum innovation and revisions to assessment. The Review was now in its final year and 51% of all modules and 55% of all programmes would have been reformed by the 2023/24 academic year.

The following points were made in discussion:

- The Portfolio Simplification process was a prime example of “One King’s” as the key to its success had been the whole institution agreeing principles and acting together to implement them. Other universities in the sector were now looking King’s to learn from this programme. The same methodology was now being employed to review assessment and feedback.
- Proof of success would be continuing to keep the momentum and applying the now deeply entrenched principles in reviewing ongoing programmes and approving new ones.
- The underpinning principle that all programmes must be sustainable should ensure that no modules are dependent upon delivery by a single individual and so EDI considerations around closure during maternity leave and similar situations should not occur. Where there was dependency on a single individual, this would be examined with the Faculty.
- Conversations around the development of pathways through modules were welcome.
- Council asked for information on the financial objectives of the programme and whether they had been met to be provided at a future meeting.

8 Report of the KCLSU

8.1 Summary Report of Key Issues [KCC-23-05-11-08.1]

The KCLSU President presented his report which was taken as read. The following items were noted, and points made in discussion:

- Cost of Living: King’s response to the ongoing concerns regarding the Cost-of-Living crisis were welcome, but students had not ceased to struggle and required additional support. KCLSU proposed that King’s should subsidise its general accommodation fee to provide more affordable accommodation for all beyond the 1100 students provided for under the KAAS scheme, or that fee increases be applied differentially.

It was noted that King’s worked to enable all of its students to be able to live in central London and provided a range of affordable accommodation, working closely with KCLSU to negotiate fee increases. It did not take any margin out of the residences and also provided a sector-leading affordable accommodation scheme (KAAS) with around twenty percent of its bed stock held below market rates. Demand for KAAS exceeded supply each year and was subject to regular review and a full review of the scheme would be undertaken in 2023-24 which would also investigate its extension to postgraduate students. KAAS investment was around £3m per year. There were fantastic welfare teams within the residences. The general accommodation fee increases for 2023-24 would be 5%, but this would not be applied to KAAS despite significant inflation. Council members underlined the importance of continual review to ensure the provision of affordable accommodation.

KCLSU would continue its discussion over tuition fee payment instalments with the Finance Team outside of the meeting.

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- Discrimination on campus: KCLSU looked forward to working with King's on policies related to discrimination, related in particular to recent campus events including a personal attack on the KCLSU President. Discrimination and Islamophobia were a problem across HE.

It was noted that King's had absolutely no intent to back away from its position of zero tolerance.

KCLSU was reviewing the policies already in place at King's and to identify actions that could be taken. It would also be conducting a survey of student experience, including support available to students and their utilisation of it. Results would be provided to Council when ready.

8.2 KCLSU Annual Report 2021-22 [KCC-23-05-11-08.2]

Council noted the KCLSU Annual Report 2021-22.

9 Reports of Committees

9.1 Governance & Nominations Committee [KCC-23-05-11-09.1]

The Chair of Governance and Nominations Committee gave a verbal update on the upcoming governance review. The following key points were noted:

- Two consultancies had submitted very good proposals for conducting the review. The proposal from the successful firm would be circulated to members on a confidential basis.
- Recommendations for next steps were currently under review. These would include a survey to be completed by all Council members early in the process and opportunity for each member of Council to meet with the consultants.

9.2 Academic Board [KCC-23-05-11-09.2]

All items approved or noted on the Unanimous Consent Agenda.

10 Any Other Business

A staff Council Member recorded thanks to the VP (Finance) for background information and support that had assisted her in understanding the College's financial processes and documents.

An invitation to attend a breakfast briefing on the Student Success Transformation Programme with the new Executive Director for Transformation of Education and Student Outcomes, Keith Zimmerman, would be circulated shortly.

11 Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 19:40.
